

REMARKS

I. Introduction

By the present Amendment, claims 1-4 and 8-12 have been amended. Claims 5-7 and 13-30 have been canceled. Claims 31-38 are newly presented for consideration. Accordingly, claims 1-4, 8-12, and 31-38 are now pending in the application. Claims 1, 8, 31, and 35 are independent.

II. Office Action Summary

In the Office Action of September 26, 2005, the Specification was objected to because of various informalities. Claims 3, 7, 11, 16, 20, and 23 were objected to because of various informalities. Claims 5, 6, and 8 were rejected under 35 USC §112, second paragraph. Claim 1 was rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Application No. 2002/0007311 published to Iseki, et al. ("Iseki"). Claims 2 and 3 were rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Iseki in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,525,768 issued to Obradovich, et al. ("Obradovich"). Claim 4 was rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Iseki in view of Obradovich and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,512,856 issued to Davis. Claims 5-7 were rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Iseki in view of Obradovich, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,665,363 issued to Mahe ("Mahe"). Claims 8, 12-13, 17, 18, 21, and 24 were rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over the "Component Repairs" publication ("Component Repairs") in view of Mahe and further in view of Obradovich. Claims 9, 14, 19, and 22 were rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Component Repairs in view of Mahe and further in view of Obradovich and still further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,388,129 issued to Hartley.

Claims 10, 11, 15, 16, 20, and 23 were rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Component Repairs in view of Mahe and further in view of Obradovich and still further in view of Hartley, and still further in view of Davis. Claims 25-30 were rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Component Repairs in view of Mahe, and further in view of Obradovich and still further in view of U.S. Patent No. 2002/0056043 published to Glass. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

III. Objections to Specification

The Specification was objected to because of various informalities. Specifically, the Office Action directs reference to several instances of grammatical errors at pages 8 and 9.

By the present Amendment, Applicants have revised the Specification to correct the errors cited in the Office Action. Accordingly, withdrawal of this objection is respectfully requested.

IV. Objections to Specification

Claims 3, 7, 11, 16, 20, and 23 were objected to because of various informalities. Specifically, the Office Action indicates that each of these claims recites the word "cleanness." Further, the Office Action indicates that the term should be appropriately corrected to recite the word --cleanliness--.

By the present Amendment, Applicants have revised the claims, in part, to address these issues. Accordingly, this objection should be withdrawn.

V. Rejections under 35 USC §112

Claims 5, 6, and 8 were rejected under 35 USC §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject

matter regarded as the invention. Regarding this rejection, the Office Action cites various instances of language that was considered indefinite or otherwise lacking in proper antecedent basis.

By the present Amendment, Applicants have reviewed the claims and made appropriate corrections to address all instances of indefiniteness cited in the Office Action.

It is therefore respectfully submitted that, as amended, the presently pending claims are in compliance with the requirements of 35 USC §112, second paragraph. Withdrawal of this rejection is therefore respectfully requested.

VI. Rejections under 35 USC §102

Claim 1 was rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by Iseki. Regarding this rejection, the Office Action alleges that Iseki discloses a system for providing services by storing photograph image data in a large capacity server installed in a camera shop and then providing services through download or printing of stored data. Further, the Office Action indicates that Iseki discloses recording and storing of image data photographed by the camera to the server from terminals installed in various points via a communication line. The storage requesting persons can exchange data with other persons and a credit card number input screen is transmitted from the digital album provider and displayer. When the card name of the applicable credit company is selected, the number is input to the card number input column and the contact button is clicked so that it can be determined if a payment contract has been agreed. Applicants respectfully disagree.

As amended, independent claim 1 defines a method for transmitting image information that comprises the steps:

imaging an object by using a digital camera means so that a digital image of said object is acquired;

subjecting said acquired digital image to an image falsification prevention treatment;

detecting a defect on said object by processing the results of said image falsification prevention treatment and extracting a feature of a detected defect;

transmitting said processed digital image and information corresponding to said detected defect and its extracted feature via communications means;

receiving said processed digital image and information corresponding to said detected defect and its extracted feature;

checking said received digital image to detect the presence of image falsification; and

storing said received and falsification checking digital image, information of said detected defect, and its extracted feature in a memory.

According to independent claim 1, an object is imaged using, for example, a digital camera so that a digital image of the object can be acquired. The acquired digital image is subject to an image falsification prevention treatment. Next, the results of the image falsification prevention treatment are processed so that defects on the object can be detected and extracted. The processed digital image together with the information corresponding to the detected defect, and the extracted features are transmitted via communication means. Once received, the image is checked for the presence of image falsification traits that would possibly identify fraud or other tampering. The digital image, information regarding the detected defect, and the extracted features are subsequently stored in a memory.

The Office Action alleges that Iseki discloses the features of independent claim 1. Applicants' review of Iseki, however, has not revealed any disclosure, or even suggestion, for various features that are recited in independent claim 1. For example, the invention defined by independent claim 1 requires that the digital image

be subjected to an image falsification prevention treatment immediately after it is acquired. Additionally, independent claim 1 requires that the image be checked for the presence of falsification after it has been received across the communication means. Iseki does not appear to provide any such features. Specifically, there is no disclosure or suggestion in the references for:

...

subjecting said acquired digital image to an image falsification prevention treatment;

...

checking said received digital image to detect the presence of image falsification; and

...

It is therefore respectfully submitted that, as amended, independent claim 1 is allowable over the art of record.

Claims 2-4 depend from independent claim 1, and are therefore believed allowable for at least the reasons set forth above with respect to independent claim 1. In addition, these claims each introduce novel elements that independently render them patentable over the art of record.

VII. Rejections under 35 USC §103

Claims 2-30 were rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over a multitude of references in combination with Iseki.

The cancellation of claims 5-7 and 13-30 renders this particular ground of rejection moot with respect to those claims.

Regarding claims 2-4, as previously indicated, Iseki fails to disclose features recited in independent claim 1, from which these claims depend. Accordingly, these

claims are believed allowable for at least the reasons previously set forth with respect to independent claim 1.

Independent claim 8 defines a method for transmitting image information that comprises the steps of:

imaging an object by using a digital camera means so that a digital image of said object is acquired;

subjecting said acquired digital image to an image falsification prevention treatment;

transmitting said the results of said image falsification prevention treatment for said digital image via communications means;

receiving the results of said image falsification prevention treatment and information corresponding to said detected defect and its extracted feature;

checking the received results of said image falsification prevention treatment for said digital image to detect the presence of falsification; and

storing said received and falsification checked digital image in a memory; and

detecting defects on said object by processing said falsification checked and stored digital image and extracting a feature of a detected defect.

Independent claim 8 recites features that are somewhat similar to those recited in independent claim 1. For example, independent claim 8 also requires that the digital image be subjected to an image falsification prevention treatment immediately after it is acquired. Furthermore, the image is checked for the presence of image falsification after it is received across the communication means. As previously discussed with respect to independent claim 1, Iseki does not provide any disclosure or suggestion for these particular features. Furthermore, the inclusion of secondary references such as Component Repairs, Mahe, and Obradovich does not remedy these shortcomings, since these secondary references also fail to provide any disclosure or suggestion for the claimed features. Additionally, the number of

references that have been piece-wise combined to allegedly disclose individual elements of the claimed invention strongly suggests the use of hindsight reconstruction to identify references that contain individual features of the invention in order to sustain the rejection.

It is therefore respectfully submitted that, as amended, independent claim 8 is allowable over the art of record.

Claims 9-12 depend from independent claim 8, and are therefore believed allowable for at least the reasons set forth above with respect to independent claim 8. In addition, these claims each introduce novel elements that independently render them patentable over the art of record.

Independent claims 31 and 35 are newly presented and recite features that are also similar to those recited in independent claim 1. For example, each of those claims requires that the digital image be subjected to an image falsification prevention treatment immediately after it has been acquired. Furthermore, the results of the falsification prevention treatment are checked in order to detect the presence of falsification traits on the digital image. As previously discussed with respect to independent claim 1, these particular features are not shown, or any way suggested by the any of the applied references. Furthermore, independent claims 31 and 35 specifically recite that the digital image be of a welded part of an object which has been subjected to a penetrant test processing or magnetic particle test processing. This particular feature is also not shown or suggested by the applied references.

It is therefore respectfully submitted that independent claims 31 and 35 are allowable over the art of record.

Claims 32-34 and 36-38 depend from independent claims 31 and 35, respectively. Accordingly, these claims are believed to be allowable for at least the reasons set forth above with respect to independent claims 31 and 35. In addition, these claims each introduce novel elements that independently render them patentable over the art of record.

VIII. Conclusion


For the reasons stated above, it is respectfully submitted that all of the pending claims are now in condition for allowance. Therefore, the issuance of a Notice of Allowance is believed in order, and courteously solicited.

If the Examiner believes that there are any matters which can be resolved by way of either a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney at the number indicated below.

AUTHORIZATION

Applicants request any shortage or excess in fees in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, and for which no other form of payment is offered, be charged or credited to Deposit Account No. 01-2135 (Case: 501.43326X00).

Respectfully submitted,
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